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**U.S. and EU Implement Agreement to Reduce Barriers on Transatlantic
Trade of Telecommunications and Electronic Products**

U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky announced today that the United States and the European Union have implemented mutual recognition agreement (MRA) sectoral annexes that immediately reduce barriers to approximately \$30 billion in annual transatlantic trade of telecommunications and electronic products by eliminating duplicative product testing requirements.

“This landmark step facilitates transatlantic trade in many telecommunications and information technology products by improving market access, reducing costs and shortening the time required to market certain U.S. products in the EU, while maintaining our current high levels of health, safety and environmental standards,” said Ambassador Barshefsky. “Manufacturers, regulators and consumers on both sides of the Atlantic all stand to benefit from this action.”

Following a successful two-year confidence building period under the telecommunications and electromagnetic compatibility annexes, EU regulators will now recognize certificates issued by designated labs operating in the United States that the equipment they have evaluated meets the EU requirements – and vice versa. This step eliminates duplicative assessments for most telecommunications and electronic products by permitting U.S. manufacturers to export products to the EU without additional tests and certifications.

Today’s decision officially confirms 33 different U.S. and 32 European conformity assessment bodies (CABs) as recognized to be competent by U.S. and EU government regulatory authorities to test and certify equipment under these two annexes. These CABs now may begin testing and certifying products within the scope of their designation. Additional CABs will be added in the near future.

Background

The U.S.-EU mutual recognition agreement annexes on telecommunications equipment covers

telecommunications terminal equipment, including radio transmitters, and information technology equipment. The annex on electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) covers equipment subject to EU and U.S. radio interference and compatibility requirement, including radios and VCRs imported into to the United States and most electrical and electronic equipment exported to the EU.

The US-EU MRA covers products sectors now representing over \$60 billion in annual two-way trade. The MRA, which entered into force in December 1998, will allow conformity assessment (product tests, inspections, certifications) to be performed in the United States to EU requirements, and vice-versa. When fully implemented, the MRA will eliminate duplicative assessments for products in the following sectors: telecommunications and information technology equipment; network and electromagnetic compatibility for electrical products; electrical safety for electrical and electronic products; good manufacturing practices (GMP) for pharmaceutical products; product evaluation for certain medical devices; and safety of recreational craft.